



Reaching and Serving Older LGBTQ+ Adults Impacted by Abuse in Later Life

ncall

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Disclaimer

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Presenter Introductions



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Victim Services Coordinator, NCALL



Latonya Maley (They / She)

Executive Director,
Affinity Community Services



Sherrill Wayland (She/They)

Senior Director of Special Initiatives and Partnerships, SAGE

National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)

An initiative of End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin, NCALL is committed to creating a world that respects the dignity of older adults and enhances the safety and quality of life of older victims and survivors of abuse. We engage communities to foster a collaborative, inclusive, survivor-centered response to abuse in later life.



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SAGE



SAGE is a national advocacy and services organization that's been looking out for LGBTQ+ elders since 1978. We build welcoming communities and keep our issues in the national conversation to ensure a fulfilling future for all LGBTQ+ people.

The National Resource Center on LGBTQ+ Aging provides ongoing and sustainable resource development, technical assistance, education, and training that supports the Aging and Disability Networks in providing culturally competent services to LGBTQ older adults and their caregivers.

Affinity Community Services

Affinity is a social justice organization serving the needs of the Black LGBTQ+ community with a particular focus on Black women.

For 28 years, we have centered Black queer women through community organizing, intergenerational programming, and education.

We work to end the marginalization of Black LGBTQ+ people globally by building brave activist communities where all intersections of LGBTQ+ identity are fully embraced.

Housekeeping

- Rename yourself to include: Name and Community
- Please mute yourself unless speaking to reduce background noise.
- At the conclusion of the webinar, there will be a 40-minute "Ask the Experts" session for your questions
- If you have technology issues, contact Anna Cash via private chat or (301) 767-6602.

Making the Case:
Why is this topic so important?

- Many LGBTQ+ older adults are at high risk for experiencing abuse and neglect, especially if they are living in isolation
- Fear of discrimination from support services is often a barrier to reaching out for help
- LGBTQ+ survivors have often experienced unique forms of abuse

Learning Objectives

As a result of this training, participants will be able to:

- Describe how LGBTQ+ identity impacts an older adult's experience of abuse.
- Discuss strategies for effectively reaching and serving older LGBTQ+ adults who experience abuse.
- Implement strategies for collaborating with community partners to better serve older LGBTQ+ adults.





What Does it Mean to be an Older LGBTQ+ Adult in the US?

LGBTQ+ Adults Age 50+



In 2020, there were an estimated 3 million lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people age 50 and older. By 2030, that number is expected to grow to approximately 7 million.

SAGE USA, LGBTQ+ aging facts

LGBTQ+ Aging Facts



LGBTQ+ elders are:

- 2x as likely to be single and live alone
- 4x less likely to have children
- Far more likely to have faced discrimination and social stigma
- More likely, therefore, to face poverty and homelessness, and to have poor health

SAGE USA, LGBTQ+ aging facts

Aging as LGBTQ+



Nearly one-third of LGBTQ+ older adults ages 65 and older live at or below 200% of the federal poverty level, compared to a quarter of non-LGBT older adults.

Justice in Aging, Aging as LGBT: Two Stories (2017)

Rural Aging for LGBTQ+ Older Adults



National surveys of rural areas show that between 3% and 5% of the rural population identifies as LGBT, consistent with estimates that 4.5% of the U.S. adult population identifies as LGBT.

National Resource Center on LGBTQ+ Aging, Facts About Rural Aging for LGBTQ+ Older Adults (2022).

Top Three Aging Concerns of LGBTQ+ Americans



- 76%: having adequate family and/or social supports
- 73%: lack of access to LGBT-specific senior services
- 60%: long-term care

AARP, *Maintaining Dignity: Understanding and Responding to the Challenges Facing Older LGBT Americans (An AARP survey of LGBT adults age 45-plus* (2018).

Social Supports



Isolation:

- More reliant on peers/ chosen family
- More likely to be caregivers
- Less funding, specific aging services, legal recognition, and familial support

21% of LGBTQ 50+ have provided care to friends – three and a half times the 6% of non-LGBTQ peers.

AARP, 51 Years Since Stonewall – Health, Poverty, Housing Hurdles Still Plague LGBTQ 50+ Nyers: Worse Since COVIDE: First of its Kind Report (2021)

Aging Concerns of LGBTQ+ Americans in Long-Term Care Facilities



- 67%: concerned about neglect
- 62% concerned about abuse
- 61% concerned about limited access to services
- 60% concerned about verbal or physical harassment

AARP, *Maintaining Dignity: Understanding and Responding to the Challenges Facing Older LGBT Americans (An AARP survey of LGBT adults age 45-plus* (2018).

LGBTQ+ Older Adults



LGBTQ+ older adults are at high risk for elder abuse, neglect, and various forms of crime victimization.

Elder Abuse Among LGBTQ+ Older Adults



Many LGBTQ+ older adults are at high risk for elder abuse, neglect, and various forms of exploitation because of living in isolation and fear of the discrimination they could encounter in mainstream aging settings.

National Academy on an Aging Society/GSA & SAGE, (2011).

Occurrence of Abuse, 50-94

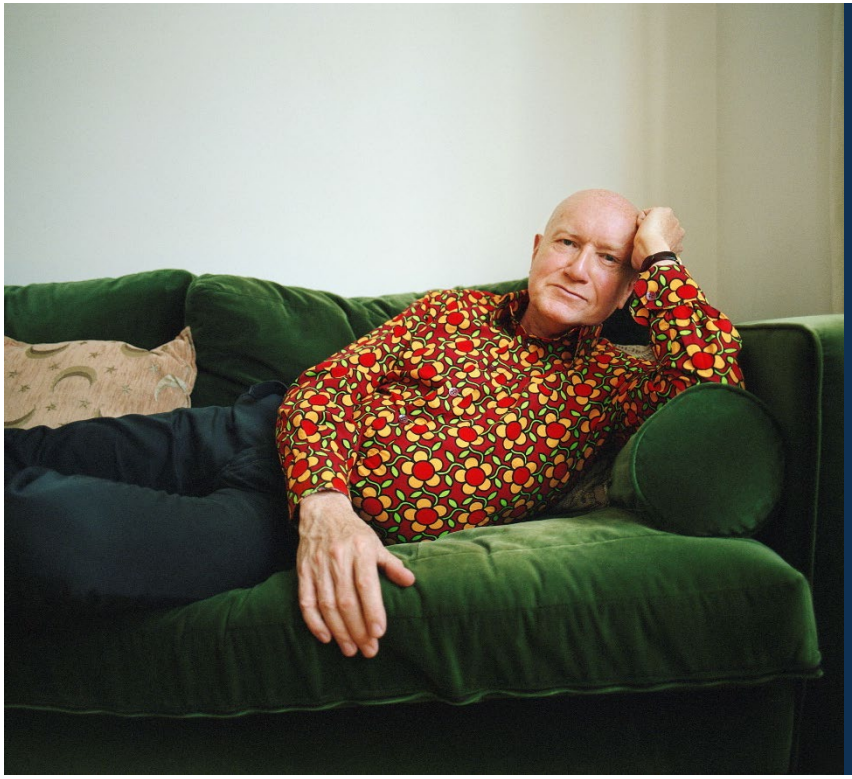


In one study of 2,560 LGBT adults, age 50-94:

- 68% had experienced verbal harassment
- 43% were threatened with violence

NCEA Research Brief: *Mistreatment of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Elders*, (2020)

Occurrence of Abuse, 60+



In one study of 416 LGBT adults, age 60+:

- 65% reported victimization
- 29% had been physically attacked

NCEA Research Brief: *Mistreatment of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Elders*, (2020)

Unique Forms of Abuse to LGBTQ+ Survivors

- Threatening to out the victim
- Telling the victim no one will help them because of their identity or sexual orientation
- Denying the victim's identity
- Saying that the abuse is normal in a same-sex relationship
- Claiming the abuse in an expression of the abuser's trait within same-sex relationships

WomensLaw.org, LGBTQIA Victims

Barriers to Seeking Help by LGBTQ+ Community & IPV

- Guilt and shame of internalized trans/homophobia
- Denial as a coping mechanism
- Fear of being out will increase discrimination

NCEA Research Brief: *Mistreatment of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Elders*, (2020)

- Lack of resources specific to understanding regarding LGBTQ+ IPV
- Stigma related to being LGBTQ+
- Systemic Inequities experienced by LGBTQ+ people

Barriers to Help Seeking for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence

2022 Report on LGBTQ+ Discrimination and Barriers to Well-Being

Of 1,828 self-identified LGBTQ+ Adults:

- More than 1 in 3 LGBTQI+ adults reported experience(s) with discrimination
- Half reported workplace discrimination or harassment in the past year
- Nearly 3 in 10 reported housing discrimination or harassment
- Nearly 4 in 5 reported taking at least one action to avoid experiencing discrimination

CAP, Discriminationand and Barriers o Well-Being: The State f the LGBTQI+ Community in 2022

2022 Report on LGBTQ+ Discrimination and Barriers to Well-Being (Cont'd)

- More than 1 in 5 reported postponing or avoiding medical care in the past year due to disrespect or discrimination by providers
- More than half indicate their mental health has been affected or feel less safe because of legislative debates and bills regarding restricting LGBTQI+ rights
- Approximately 1 in 3 reported encountering at least one kind of negative experience or form of mistreatment when interacting with a mental health professional in the past year

Discrimination Experienced by LGBTQ+ Older Adults in Long-Term Care Facilities

- Denial of visitors
- Refusal to allow same-sex couples to share rooms
- Refusal to place a transgender elder in a ward that matches their gender identity
- Keeping partners from participation in medical decision making

Mistreatment Experienced by Transgender Older Adults in Long-Term Care Facilities

- Physical abuse
- Denial of personal care services
- Psychological abuse
- Being involuntarily “outed”
- Being prevented from dressing according to their gender identity
- Refused admission

Gender Expansive Communities



The gender expansive community faces unique challenges and increased fear of discrimination.

AARP, *Maintaining Dignity: Understanding and Responding to the Challenges Facing Older LGBT Americans (An AARP survey of LGBT adults age 45-plus* (2018).

Intersectionality



Kimberlé Crenshaw introduced the concept to describe “The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, which create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.”

Intersecting Identities



One-size-fits-all approaches do not consider the values, history, and culture of an older survivor.

Multiple Forms of Discrimination



Black and Latino LGBTQ+ Americans are more concerned about multiple forms of discrimination and negative outcomes as they age.

AARP, *Maintaining Dignity: Understanding and Responding to the Challenges Facing Older LGBT Americans (An AARP survey of LGBT adults age 45-plus* (2018).

Rita



- 55-year-old, mixed race, transgender woman
- Living with partial paralysis resulting from a stroke
- Socially isolated
- Hired Terry to provide daily care
  - Asks for loans she doesn't pay back
  - Calls Rita names
  - Hit Rita last week

Rita (Cont'd)



- What identities did we learn of from Rita's story?
- What concerns do you have for Rita?

An Intersectional Lens



“ Our multiple identities must be thoughtfully considered in the services we provide and how we provide them, the innovations we create, and the reforms and policies for which we advocate.”





Reaching & Serving Older LGBTQ+ Adults

Strategies to reach and serve LGBTQ+ Older Adults

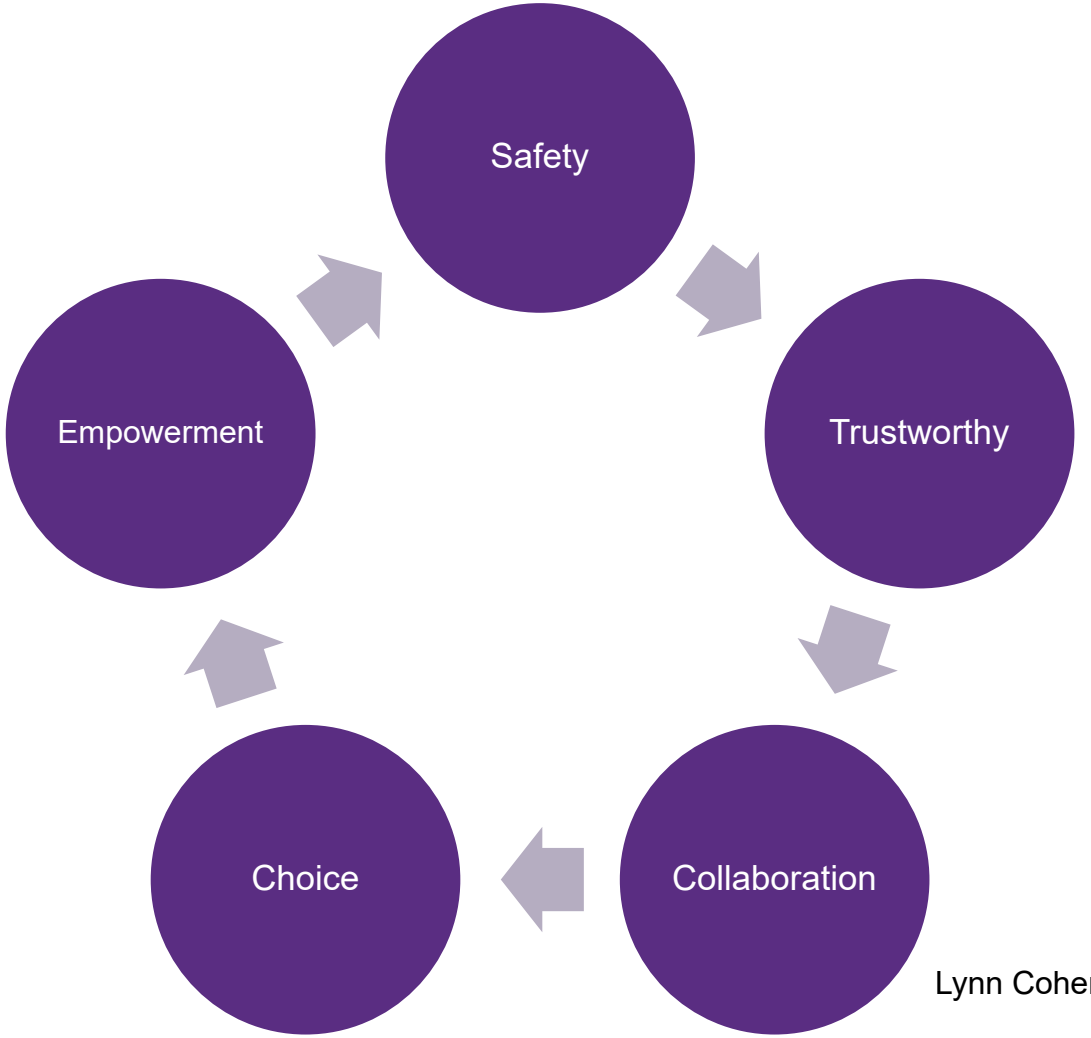
- Agencies must address any attitudes of homophobia, biphobia, and/or transphobia
- Prioritize the production and sharing of materials focused on LGBTQ+ survivors
- Identify (or create) LGBTQ+ community resources dedicated to offering safe support; share your outreach materials with them

Culturally Competent Service Provision to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Survivors of Sexual Violence (vawnet.org)

Trauma Informed Care

- "**Understands** and considers the pervasive **nature of trauma** and promotes **environments of healing and recovery** rather than practices or services that may inadvertently retraumatize the person." - Institute of Trauma Informed Care
- Framework that informs procedures, policies, settings, and environment
- Promote wellbeing of care receivers & providers

Principles of TIC with Older Adults



Lynn Cohen, Durham Rape Crisis Center

Interpersonal Intervention

- Normalize asking and using correct name and pronouns
- Build rapport: ask about personal life, interest, romantic relationships without assumptions
- Center their desires and support system in care planning
- Prepare to connect them to LGBTQ resources

Structural Interventions

- Staff development
- Workplace culture and staff care
- Intake, Forms, and Electronic Records System
- Built environment
- MoU and warm handoff procedures
- Client policies:
  - Mandated reporting & Bill of Rights

Important Factors for Service Providers to Remember

- No one has better expertise than survivors themselves
- Chosen family and neighbors
- Accessing existing social supports:
  - What resources can they offer people we serve?
  - Can we exchange skills to maximize their role in providing safety and healing?
  - Who are folks who can identify abuse?
  - Who are first responders?

Rita



What support could be helpful for Rita?





Collaboration Strategies

Identifying Potential Partners

Look for organizations that address any areas of intersectionality within the LGBTQ+ community, like:

- Racial Justice
- Immigration
- Income Inequality
- Mental Health
- Policy Advocacy

Conventional Collaboration Partners



Engagement with Partners that Reflect the LGBTQ+ Community

- Inclusion of survivors and their informal providers
- Strong linkages between organizations
- Frequent communication
- Bi-directional education
- Joint events and projects
- Set in places where older adults gather

Resources to Seek in Your Community

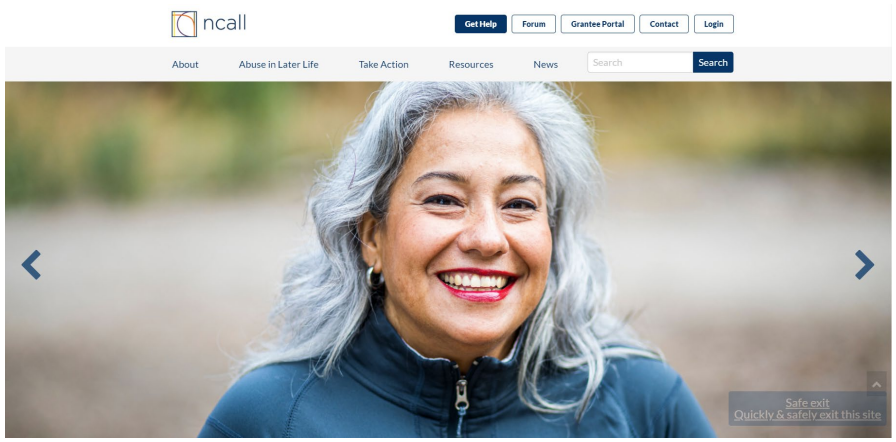
- LGBTQ+ local advocacy organizations
- City or County Office on LGBTQ+ outreach/affairs
- Culturally-Specific LGBTQ+ orgs
- Community-based LGBTQ+ organizations
- Pride celebration organizations and leaders
- CenterLink Community Directory

Resources & National Organizations for Learning More

- National Resource Center on Domestic Violence's VAWNET site
- SAGE's National Resource Center on LGBT Aging
- National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA)
- FORGE
- American Society on Aging
- National Black Justice Coalition

Staying Connected to NCALL

Sign up for our e-newsletter:
www.ncall.us/take-action



Website: www.ncall.us

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Thank You for Attending!

Presenter Information

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